

The Calling of a Prophet  
11th Sunday after Pentecost - Year C - 08/25/2019  
Psalm Reading: 71:1-6  
1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Jer. 1:4-10, 17-19, 2<sup>nd</sup>: Luke 13:10-17

Jeremiah was a prophet who was famous for prophesying on the destruction of Judah at the hands of the Babylonians in the time of Jehoiakim. He suffered for bringing the truth to the people of Judah. He was the son of a priest, and was said to have been a prophet for about 40 years. I think this reading where God calls Jeremiah is an example of how God calls all of us.

*(v.4-5) The word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you...*

God knows us.

God spans all time and space.

*...before you were born I set you apart.*

What being "set apart" means.

We are all set apart – a holy people  
to be the Body of Christ.

*I appointed you as a prophet of nations.*

God appointed Jeremiah to be a prophet.

The Nature of Prophecy

Telling the truth.

Jonah!

"Forty more days..."

Does God appoint us to a task?

Are we predestined to be who we will be?

The nature of predestination.

Based not on God's Providence,  
but God's Grace.

Then Jeremiah responds, saying (v.6):

*"Alas, Sovereign Lord, I do not know how to speak; I am too young."*

Jeremiah making excuses.

Common for prophets to be reticent.

Moses, (same excuse about speaking.)

We make excuses, too.

(v.7) *But the Lord said to me, "Do not say, 'I am too young.'"*

God dismisses excuse out of hand.

Youth, nor any other condition are disqualifiers.

No special talent needed.

Ordinary people do extraordinary things.

God continues: *"You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you."*

Though we suspected it before, we know exactly what  
Jeremiah's call is to be.

This is our call as well.

We do not choose call – God chooses us for it.

We are messengers of God

Angels "Ev-angel-ism"

(v.8) *"Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the Lord.*

Hard message.

Idols

Be faithful or Babylonians come.

Response to hard message.

Meet with skepticism and doubt. Ridicule.

(v.9) *Then the Lord reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "I have put my words in your mouth."*

Words directly to Jeremiah and to us.

We also have scripture.

(v.10) *"See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant."*

God telling Jeremiah to preach destruction like Jonah, and maybe people will change.

God knows that Jeremiah will be telling the people hard things, but he will also be advising them as to what is good.

Even after the people did not listen. Even after all of the disasters that Jeremiah had prophesied have come to pass, and the people have been cleared off from the land and brought to Babylon, God has Jeremiah write them a letter to give them hope. (Jer. 29:5-7) *"Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Marry and have children; find wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage. Increase in number there; do not decrease. Seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper."*

So, even if the worst happens, God still wants what is good for the people.

(v.17) In verse 17 of our reading, God continues speaking to Jeremiah, *"Get yourself ready! Stand up and say to them*

*whatever I command you. Do not be terrified by them, or I will terrify you before them.”*

Practical advice.

Confident

Don't care too much about what people say.

(Bible study) Find common ground and word from there.

*(v.18-19) “Today I have made you a fortified city, an iron pillar and a bronze wall to stand against the whole land – against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests and the people of the land. They will fight against you but will not overcome you, for I am with you and will rescue you,” declares the Lord.*

So Jeremiah is made like a fortified city.

Strong in the Lord.

Those who need it the most resist the message.

The Lord always with us. And protect us.

Like Jeremiah we are all called to deliver God's Word, to prophesy.

Sometimes dramatically, like Paul / Moses / Martin Luther.

Sometimes simply raised in the faith.

The important thing is to answer the call.

Not a Robo-call. Not someone wanting us to do a credit check, or take a survey.

Cannot be ignored. In fact we do so at our peril.

This is a call to have a relationship with God, and with each other, it is a call to prophesy to the world. It is something that God has already determined that we will accept

through God's Grace. And, yes, we may resist it, but ultimately, God's will shall be done.

Please put yourselves in a posture for prayer...

Eternal God, you call to us to be your holy people, acting in faith and love. You call us to prophesy to the world of your goodness, love, justice, and judgment. Lord help us to be strong in our faith, and to be a fortress before the nay-sayers. Lord put your words, the words from your holy book on the tips of our tongues that we may bring your message to all peoples.

ἀμήν